The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and editorial interpretations of matters affecting labor occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR
WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

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WE PLEDGE—
1 BILLION DOLLARS
WAR SAVINGS BONDS
FOR VICTORY

WHOLE NO. 1774 | WILLIAM GREEN, President | WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, APRIL 10, 1945 | GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer | VOL. 35, NO. 15

Texas Legislator Charges Bribery Practiced by Antilabor Racketeers

El Paso, Tex.—W. W. Bridgers, veteran member of the State Legislature, charged in a sensational, signed article published by the El Paso Times that some members of the Legislature are being bribed to vote in favor of antilabor legislation.

High-paid lobbyists literally infest the State House, Bridgers declared. There are so many of them, he said, that members of the House, arriving at a daily session, "have to elbow their way through the congregated lobbyists who virtually block the great door of the House of Representatives."

For one day they vanished—the day that a committee of the legislature began an investigation into charges that the "Christian American Association" and other racket organizations had been spending money freely to promote several drastic antiunion bills pending in the legislature.

After the first day of the probe, they were all back again, however, Bridgers pointed out.

Bribery of the solons goes on freely, he said. "Money has always been spent in influencing the legislature," he explained. "As time goes on more and more money is spent."

(Austin, Tex.—Despite scandalous charges concerning its backing, the Texas House of Representatives passed by a close vote of 68 to 62 and sent to the State Senate a bill outlawing the closed shop.)

The sad part of it all, Bridgers declared, is that some legislators are "bought so cheaply as to make one blush at the thought of it." Some sell their votes merely for liquor and entertainment.

"This is not an indictment of the legislature as a whole," he stressed. "It is an indictment of those few wealthy who are controlled by the blandishments of highly-paid gentlemen."

Lobbyists have been particularly active in trying to put over the so-called Bell-Johnson "freedom of work" bill, designed to outlaw "union shop" agreements and thus cripple unions in the Lone Star state, Bridgers declared.

One of the foremost lobby organizations for that bill has been the "Christian American Association," run by Vance Muse, who has been exposed by the Scripps-Howard papers as a cheap "racketeer."

"Money means nothing to the interests that are promoting the bill," Bridgers charged. "It is the reactionary, anti-New Deal influence which is spending millions not only in Texas but in other states in opposition to organized labor.

"It is a movement to break down living wages; a movement by big-monied interests fighting for large scale poverty—interests that frankly believe in poverty for the masses and riches for the few."

The El Paso solon-columnist also riddled claims by Muse that labor organizations have poured in money to defeat the antiunion legislation.

"You can take it from me, from personal, close-up observation, that there is no scintilla of truth to this charge," he said. "It is merely one of the adroit schemes for muddying the waters. Representatives of organized labor here in Austin are fighting the bill with their bare hands, so to speak.

Bridgers wound up with a few choice blasts at Senator W. Lee O'Daniel, who has been going up and down the country propagandizing for antilabor laws. When O'Daniel ran for his first office, that of governor, "dimes, quarters and dollars of small people financed his campaign," Bridgers declared.

Later O'Daniel got all his money from interests, turned his back on the common people and has become a wealthy man, "owning his own ranch now."

This AFL Hero Was Unstoppable--And His Name is Unspellable

Washington, D. C.—The Nazis found Pfc. Mitchell J. J. Pyzybys (correct) just as hard to stop as his name is hard to spell. The son of a member of the AFL's International Association of Machinists, has just received the Army's Silver Star Medal for his heroic exploits.

Pfc. Pyzybys—wonder how he pronounces it?—served in Africa and Italy and is now somewhere in France. When he was in Italy last April, the War Department informs us, this stalwart soldier voluntarily ran 400 yards through heavy enemy shelling, with some explosives landing within a few feet of him, to repair a wire line. This was not his responsibility since he was serving in a mortar squad. Then, with enemy shells still bursting all around him, Pfc. Pyzybys used to live in Chicopee, Miss., and was employed at the J. Stevens Arms Co. He has two brothers-in-law in the service. His family and his union are proud of his name, even though it is tough to spell.

Senate to Start Hearings on Prospects Of Attaining Jobs-For-All in Postwar

Washington, D. C.—Public hearings to develop all the facts bearing on full employment after the war will be opened by the Senate Banking and Currency Committee soon Senator Robert F. Wagner of New York, its chairman, announced.

Before Senator Wagner's committee, when the projected hearings begin, will be the full employment bill of which he is one of the sponsors, and others being Senator James E. Murray of Montana, Senator Elbert Thomas of Utah, Senator Joseph C. O'Mahoney of Wyoming and Representative Wright Patman of Texas. All the sponsors would make statements at the opening of the hearings, Senator Wagner said.

In his statement Senator Wagner described mass unemployment as the "greatest threat" to the freedom of the nation's economic and political institutions and declared that it would make it "impossible" for the United States to exert its full influence to build a lasting peace.

The purpose of the hearings, he said, are twofold: "To develop the basic facts" about what full employment and full production will mean to the American people, and to explore the most practical methods for achieving "the best possible conditions of employment and business activity."

The committee, he added, would seek to present a "concrete proposal" that would represent a minimum of disagreement about methods and a maximum of agreement "based upon knowing the facts and discussing the facts calmly and democratically without bias or prejudice or emotion."

Witnesses "in all walks of life" would be called, Senator Wagner said, and testimony from other veterans would be awaited most "anxiously."

In his statement he used the term "full employment" deliberately and did not mention any specific goal, such as the 60,000,000-job figure frequently used by Administration spokesmen.

Valiant AFL Seamen Get Medals For Deeds in Merchant Marine

New York City.—One Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal, 46 Mariner's Medals awarded posthumously, and 7 Mariner's Medals awarded for wounds and suffering as the result of enemy action, were presented to members of the Seafarers International Union in the official award lists released this month by the War Shipping Administration.

Not only did SIU men receive a great percentage of the awards made, but the highest award available to seamen, the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal, was presented to SIU Ordinary Seaman Mike Kuzma.

Kuzma was aboard the tanker Virginia when she was struck by 2 enemy torpedoes. She exploded and the surrounding water became an inferno of burning gasoline. Only 14 men survived the death trap. Kuzma was severely burned in the blast, but swam through the flame-swept water to assist another badly burned seaman who had become entangled in his attempt to escape. In spite of his own injuries, Kuzma succeeded in towing both men out of the flaming area and in supporting them until they were picked up by rescue craft. For this deed, exemplifying the crew of the merchant seaman, he was presented the Distinguished Service Medal.

Slave Labor Bill Killed; Voluntary Plan Dying

Washington, D. C.—If any kind of manpower legislation is adopted by this Congress, it will be voluntary in character.

This construction situation resulted from the smashing defeat of the Job-freeze "compromise" by a 46 to 29 vote in the Senate after the House of Representatives had approved it.

The Senate, on motion of Senator O'Mahoney, of Wyoming, voted to send the matter back to conference with representatives of the House in an attempt to force a vote in the House on the voluntary manpower bill originally approved by the Senate.

However, the House was in an extended Easter recess and further action may be delayed.

The Senate vote bars any further attempt to push compulsory manpower legislation into law at this session, observers say. Unless the House concurs in the Senate bill, no manpower legislation will be adopted.

With victory in Europe in a matter of weeks being freely predicted, many lawmakers joined labor leaders in expressing fears that the nation will be plagued with manpower surpluses, instead of shortages, before the end of the year.

The ridiculousness of tightening manpower controls in the face of mounting unemployment has become so apparent, that Congressional leaders are beginning to believe that there is no need for any manpower legislation.

Strikes Provoked by Employers and By Government Agencies, Morse Says

Washington, D. C.—Many wartime strikes have been provoked by employers and by government agencies, Senator Wayne L. Morse, of Oregon, former member of the National War Labor Board, declared in a nationwide radio address.

In most of the strikes he has dealt with during the war the employers' hands have "not been illy-white" and many bosses have imposed upon labor's no-strike pledge to "goad workers to the limit," the Senator said.

"During this war the public, at least in the headlines, has been fed strike news, but little news about the unworthy conduct of employers which too frequently has been provocative of labor unrest," he continued.

"Too often labor has been taken advantage of, labor's pledge not to strike by refusing to settle shop grievances quickly and fairly. Some employers have attempted to break a union by such slow-lower tactics as refusing to bargain or by stalling bargaining or by supporting a rival union or by showing various forms of favoritism designed to stir up dissension, jealousy and dissatisfaction between workers and union officials."

Propagandists have blamed labor for "loafing" in war plants, but the fact is, Morse said, workers have struck in protest against being forced to loaf. Time and again, with little success, he declared, union officials have pleaded with management and government agencies to give plants more contracts, to "permit the men to do a fair day's work for a fair day's pay," or else transfer them to other plants where they could be fully utilized.

Morse charged, too, that "the government must take its share of responsibility for wartime strikes" because it has not always "kept faith with its obligations" to settle disputes quickly and fairly.

He condemned particularly the administration's action in super-imposing the Office of Economic Stabilization, and the Office of War Mobilization on top of existing dispute adjustment agencies.

Labor Fights for Jobs for Veterans; Sees Full Employment Best Guarantee

Washington, D. C.—The only sure way of establishing job protection for veterans is to win the war, labor bigs about full employment, organized labor told the Government.

In a joint report to Gen. Frank T. Hines, Director of the Veterans Administration, the AFL, CIO and railroad unions declared:

"Only full employment can assure to the veteran the security and opportunity he has earned at the risk of his life. Efforts to maintain reasonably full employment will give rise to social tensions threatening our country with the rise of a tyrannical dictatorship similar to those the veteran has fought to destroy in other lands.

"A diseased economy would jeopardize the employed veteran's wage scale and force him to share his earnings, through taxation and otherwise, with his unemployed fellow citizens. His job would be endangered by the lack of a market for the products of his labor and by willingness of others to do his work for lower wages.

"No form of veterans' preference could long withstand such economic pressures. Our first obligation to the veteran, therefore, is to plan as a nation for an expanding economy in which there are jobs at decent wages for all able and willing to work."

With or without full employment, the three labor groups made it clear they are determined to fight at this square deal for the returning soldiers. They pledged all possible efforts, not only to restore reinstatement to their former jobs with accumulated rights and privileges, but also to help place those who never held jobs before and to find new work for disabled "vets" who cannot perform their former tasks.

They called for a liberal interpretation of reinstatement provisions of the Selective Service law so as to plug loopholes under which many "vets" can now be barred from restoration to their old jobs.

For example, the law now only protects "regular" employes, not "temporary" ones. The labor organizations urged that this limitation be applied so that any veteran, even if he had held a "temporary" position prior to induction, shall be deemed "regular" if he had acquired seniority rights or if his former or a similar position still exists on his return.

Also, the law now practically closes the doors to employment of "disabled" veterans, since an employer may not rehire a service man who is no longer "qualified" to perform the duties of his old job.

The labor groups insisted that the law be interpreted to permit the disabled "vet" to exercise a seniority claim to any job in his former plant that he can do—or, if no seniority system exists, he should be given preference in such job over any workers hired after he had gone into service.

The same kind of preference was advocated for any veteran whose former job or one of "like seniority, status and pay" no longer exists. In many other ways, the program of the labor organizations called for protection to service men beyond the narrow limits of the law.

The three groups united in warning against a so-called "supersenority" plan pushed by some Selective Service officials, which would go beyond restoration of a "vet" to his full job rights. Under that plan, a service man could "jump" a worker with far greater seniority. Thus a son could oust his father from a job he may have held for 20 years or more, or a veteran of this war could force out a "vet" of World War I.

The unions contended such a plan was in conflict with the law and if applied would swell the long-established seniority systems, thus depriving all veterans, as well as civilians, of one of their major bulwarks of job security.

THE AFL PRESENTS . . . 'BUILDERS OF VICTORY'

The Dramatic Story of Labor's Own Seabees

OVER CBS—EVERY SATURDAY—3:45 P.M., E.W.T.

Green Launches AFL's Part Of Seventh War Loan Drive

Union Gets Front-Line News on Ambulance Bought With Bonds

New York City.—Members of Sheet Metal Workers International Association Local No. 137, whose War Bond subscriptions during the Fifth War Loan Drive were allocated to the purchase of 5 field ambulances, have just received a "front line" report on the performance of this equipment. In a letter to M. Rosen, secretary of the local union, Corp. Woodrow C. Morris writes from France:

"I am an ambulance driver and, as you no doubt surmise, the driver of the ambulance you donated to the service. You have probably wondered about the wherewhents of your vehicle, so I've taken this opportunity of informing you.

"Yes, old 'Russ-Rine,' as I've named it, is doing front line duty. England, Belgium, Holland and France have passed under her wheels and a good many more thousands of miles are in store for her. She's still in fine shape and I'll admit that I'm a bit proud of her.

"'Russ-Rine' has carried many a battle casualty to the rear for additional medical care and, without a doubt, has been instrumental in saving the life of many a soldier.

"As a fellow member of the AFL, it does me proud that you on the home front have generously donated funds towards the purchase of this ambulance for so worthy a cause."

Each of the ambulances purchased with the union's bond subscriptions carries a bronze plaque with the name of the donor inscribed.

Ringing of Liberty Bell Sets Off Intensive Campaign To Buy Bonds

Philadelphia.—With the ringing of the Liberty Bell seven times, AFL President William Green launched the Seventh War Loan Drive in Independence Hall. In a radio talk addressed to the entire nation, he urged workers to buy more Series E Bonds than ever before to make victory certain.

Flanked by distinguished representatives of Government and industry, Mr. Green said:

"The need of the nation is greater than ever before. The cruel war in which we are engaged is calling for the sacrifice of human life. It is consuming all materials, service and contributions which we can make.

"Men and women of labor—friends of labor everywhere—listen to the nation's call! Participate in the Seventh War Loan Drive by purchasing more bonds than you ever purchased in any previous War Loan Drive. Resolve firmly now to do this and by so doing help our brave fighting forces inflict the final blow upon our enemies on the battlefields."

Mr. Green recalled in his talk that organized labor took part in the earliest moves to gain independence in America when the Carpenters' Union of Philadelphia loaned its meeting hall to the founding fathers when they gathered to consider the Declaration of Independence.

"And few in the fight against Nazism and Fascism," he continued, "labor is responding and must continue to respond to the call of the Government for service and support."

It is estimated that unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and the seven million members of the AFL have already purchased four billion dollars worth of War Bonds.

Mr. Green's talk launched another intensive drive to enable AFL members to invest another billion dollars of their earnings and savings in war bonds during the coming campaign.

Efforts will be made by the AFL's organizing and regional staffs to prevail upon workers to supplement their regular purchases of War Bonds, through payroll allotments, with extra purchases to the limit of their financial ability.

Mr. Green said that the payroll allotment plans, originated by labor, "will always stand as a brilliant page in the record of labor's war activities."

The ceremonies at Independence Hall were under the auspices of the Treasury Department, which is cooperating closely with labor in the bond selling campaign.

MEANY HITS PLANS OF LEFT-WING LABOR

New York City.—The American Federation of Labor still believes faithfully in the principles of the Atlantic Charter and will endeavor to have them fully applied, "with consistency and vigor" in our nation's foreign policy, AFL Secretary-Treasurer George Meany declared in an address before the Central Trades and Labor Council here.

With this as his text, Mr. Meany proceeded to deliver a slashing attack against the so-called "World Trade-Union Conference" recently held in London.

After outlining the four major reasons why the AFL refused to participate in this conference, Mr. Meany declared:

"Now that the so-called labor conference is over, it is most interesting and enlightening to take note of the results and of the evident intentions of those who dominated its actions.

"It is also of great significance that of the conference, a lawyer in Mexico City announced that he was going to the United Nations Conference at San Francisco in April as one of the representatives of the conference to speak for all the workers of the United Nations. Sir Walter Citrine made a similar announcement from London a few months ago. Citrine is the president of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers (CIO) said he was going to San Francisco as a member of the same group for the same purpose. Well, there it is.

"A self-constituted committee representing themselves to be the spokesmen of labor and of a conference of nations. Are they operating in the field of world politics on the basis of any authority given to them by democratic action of workers anywhere in the world? No—they do not. Do they have an organic body established by workers through democratic action? No—they do not.

Exposing the "essentially political character" of the conference, Mr. Meany pointed out that the Soviet Unions, claiming to represent 27 million workers, were able to dominate the meeting along with support from other communistically-inclined labor groups.

Also, of the 35 countries supposed to be represented at the conference, 15 were British colonies and possessions. Included in this group, Mr. Meany said, were Australia, Canada, Northern Rhodesia, Gambia, Cyprus, Jamaica, Gold Coast, Nigeria, British Guiana, none of which has a recognized labor movement.

"I am certain that AFL's long record against Fascism and aggression, Mr. Meany concluded:

"I am certain that the real friends of Britain in America when she was fighting with her back to the wall—when we did not suddenly discover on June 22, 1941, that Hitler and his gang were a menace to free men everywhere in the world. We were aware of this long before that time. It was necessary for the American Federation of Labor to turn any somersaults in June of 1941. The stark truth of this matter is that we occupy the same position today as we did in all the years when aggression was on the march.

"In the final analysis, we can sum all of this up and say that the American Federation of Labor has fought for the principles embodied in the Atlantic Charter for 60 years before there was an Atlantic Charter. And even though there are those here in America who do not like to hear the Atlantic Charter mentioned because its principles do not seem to find favor with one of our fighting allies, I can assure you here tonight that the American Federation of Labor still believes in these principles and will in the future apply them with consistency and vigor as a standard of conduct for itself—for its friends—and in its relations with trade unions of other countries."

NEW INDUSTRY PACT PRAISED BY GREEN

Washington, D. C.—The new labor-management pact will instil confidence in America's future and help to promote full production and full employment in postwar America, AFL President William Green declared in a nation-wide radio address over NBC.

Mr. Green appealed to labor, to employers and to the American public to support the new labor-management charter and to help put its principles into practical effect.

"It means," he said, "the substitution of democracy for autocratic control—real teamwork instead of a constant tug-of-war within the domain of labor-management activity."

The charter does not mean, Mr. Green emphasized, that organized labor is attempting to interfere with managerial prerogatives. He explained:

"When we support labor-management collaboration, we are not offering industry a Trojan horse which will privilege upon the sphere of management."

Mr. Green welcomed the recognition of labor's rights by management, as expressed in the charter, "as a significant milestone in the nation's history." He expressed confidence that when these rights "are fully accepted and respected by industry, real teamwork between American labor and management will be achieved."

Mr. Green devoted a portion of his address to an analysis of the principles embodied in the charter which was drafted and approved by representatives of the AFL, the CIO and the United States Chamber of Commerce. He disclosed that a national committee is being formed to put the joint policies into effect.

"The membership of this committee, in my judgment, guarantees that it will devote itself to the public interest and accomplish a great deal of good," the AFL leader declared. "But however high-minded the members of this committee are, however sincere their intentions and however intelligent their approach to the problems that will confront the nation when the war ends, they can make little if any headway without the support of the American people.

"And that is why I wish to invite workers and employers alike, in every city and town of our land, to study and analyze our new charter from their own point of view and give us the benefit of their counsel and judgment.

"As Eric Johnston said, there are two wars that we can travel after this war. One will lead to a high degree of industrial peace; the other to industrial chaos. One road will mean high production, high wages and high levels of employment; the other will mean low production, lower wages and mass unemployment.

"I am certain that the American people will not permit themselves to be seduced from the main road that leads to national prosperity when peace comes.

"We have the power to produce what we need for a better life here in America. We have the plants and the machines. We have the raw materials. We will have skilled manpower in abundance, especially when our boys in the armed forces come home. All that is needed is confidence in American industry and I feel certain that the new labor-management charter will help to instil that confidence."

PROTEST MEETING TO URGE REPRESENTATION FOR ITALY

Washington, D. C.—A nationwide group of Italian-American labor, civic, political and fraternal organizations is scheduling a dinner here to consider relations between the American Government and Italy.

Luigi Antonini, chairman of the Italian-American Labor Council, said the chief purpose of the meeting would be to demand a place for the new democratic Italy in world affairs and representation for Italy at the San Francisco Conference to establish a world security organization.

NEW ANTILABOR MEASURES NOT FARING WELL

Washington, D. C.—Labor is due to emerge from the state legislatures this year with a much better batting average against antiunion laws than in either 1943 or 1944. In those two years a half dozen states enacted drastic laws designed to smash unions.

So far in 1945, however, out of 16 states which have finished their sessions, only one—South Dakota—has put through a real straitjacketing law to outlaw "union shop" agreements. In most of the other 15, antilabor bills were killed outright or pigeonholed with adjournment, while in several foes of unions ran up the white flag at the outset and didn't even introduce any restrictive legislation.

TECHNICAL ENGINEERS WIN RAILROAD ELECTION TEST

Washington, D. C.—Technical employes, as represented by the International Federation of Technical Engineers, Architects and Draftsmen's Unions, have scored another victory on the railroads.

In a National Mediation Board election, employes of the St. Louis-San Francisco Railway Co. (Frisco lines), members of Local 201 of the Technical Engineers, won 100 percent of the valid votes cast for representation. Coverage includes all technical employes of the mechanical, valuation, civil, bridge and signal departments.

Assisting in the case was N. M. B. Mediator Ross R. Barr. Local secretary Stanley Gutsby and International President Foster Pratt were present at counting of ballots.

This is the second such victory for the international in recent months. An earlier one involved similar classes of employes on the Boston & Maine road.